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Diana Wood/STB
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To joyner.william@epa.gov
cc
bcc
Subject Greenville County Railroad Abandonment

Mr. Joyner -

As you are aware from our discussion last Friday September 23rd, the Greenville County Economic Development Corporation has filed a petition with the US Surface Transportation Board (STB) seeking abandonment of approximately 11.8 miles of rail line between milepost 0.0 in Greenville, SC, and milepost 11.8 in Travelers Rest, SC ("The Northern Segment"), and discontinuance of service over 3.29 miles of line, between milepost AJK 585.34 in East Greenville, SC, and milepost 588.63 in Greenville County ("The Southern Segment"). According to the Service list provide by the applicant's attorney, the Environmental and Historic Report was submitted to the Region 4 EPA and the Columbia office of the SC Dept of Health and Environmental Control for comment. Although we didn't receive comments from the EPA, the SC Dept of Health and Environmental Control commented that salvage activities could cause a release of contaminants into neighboring waterways. They suggested forwarding a copy of the Environmental and Historic Report to the SC Dept of Health and Environmental Control, Bureau of Land and Waste Management for further review. I followed up with a request to the applicant's attorney, and then proceeded (under specified deadlines associated with the EA process) to write an Environmental Assessment (EA), based on all available information. Since the Bureau of Land and Waste Management had yet to respond, I added a condition that required the Greenville County Economic Development Corp to consult with the SC Dept of Health and Environmental Control prior to commencement of any salvage activities, and to report the results to the STB.

During the comment period, this office received comments from two parties stating that there was contamination adjacent to portions of the Northern Segment, and that three sites were listed in the EPA CERCLIS data base as Superfund sites (Union Bleachery, Kerr Manufacturing, and a Quarry). In response, I contacted Chris Bartley in the Greenville office of SC Dept of Health and Environmental Control, Bureau of Waste Management. Mr. Bartley drafted a letter (with map) that discussed the Union Bleachery site. Although monitoring revealed the presence of contamination in the immediate vicinity of the tracks, Mr. Bartley stated in a telephone conversation that no conclusions could be rendered as to the actual contamination of the railroad right-of-way because the area in question had never been tested. Last Friday, I met with my section Chief, Victoria Rutson, and our in-house attorney, Evelyn Kitay, to draft language that would ensure that salvage activities are conducted in accordance with applicable environmental and safety regulations. We determined that prior to salvage of any track materials (removal of track, ties and ballast) adjacent to the portions of the identified sites of contamination (see attached letter from Mr. Hawkins), the Greenville Economic Development Corp shall consult with the appropriate parties and take the appropriate measures recommended by the SC Dept of Health and Environmental Control, Bureau of Waste Management, and the EPA Region 4, and report the results of the consultation to the STB.

Due to the time constraints associated with the EA process, I am required by law to finalize comments tomorrow, September 27, 2005. Please review this request, the attached EA and letter from Mr. Hawkins, as well as the letter from Chris Bartley I sent you last Friday, and let me know by COB today if you have any changes to the wording. The docket number is AB 490 1X, should you want to review the file on our web site at www.stb.dot.gov (under e-filings and environmental correspondence).

Thanks

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Letter from SCDHEC Chris Bartley.pdf